WHO Assistance for Controlling Air Pollution

*291. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether, as per the estimate made by the World Health Organisation, about thirty thousand to one lakh ten thousand people die annually in India due to the effects of air pollutants;

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to control the growing air pollution; and

(c) whether the WHO has extended any specific assistance programme in this regard and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The World Health Organisation (WHO) has made an estimate of mortality in India due to the effects of air pollutants. The lower estimate, by the WHO, of mortality per year due to urban ambient air pollution is 31,000 and the upper estimate is 1,09,000.

(b) The steps taken by the Government to reduce air pollution include the following:

(1) The Government has formulated a comprehensive Policy Statement for Abatement of Pollution which lays stress on both the control and preventive aspects of pollution.

(2) The ambient air quality of various cities and towns is monitored regularly through a network of 290 monitoring stations under the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme.

(3) Ambient air quality standards and emission standards for industrial units have been notified.

(4) Emissions from highly polluting industrial units and thermal power plants are regularly monitored and action is taken against the defaulting units.

(5) Environment action plans for reducing pollution in Delhi and Mumbai have been prepared by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, which are under implementation.

(6) Low lead petrol had been introduced in the four metro cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai w.e.f. June 1994. Subsequently, unleaded petrol for catalytic converter fitted vehicles was introduced in the above mentioned cities with effect from 1.4.1995. Unleaded petrol is being introduced in the entire country in a phased manner. Sulphur is being progressively reduced in diesel. Fuel quality standards for petrol and diesel have been notified.

(7) Gross emission standards for on-road vehicles and mass emission standards for all categories of new vehicles have been notified under the Central Motor Vehicles Rule, 1989. More stringent emission norms have also been notified and will come into effect from 1.4.2000.

(8) Fiscal incentives are provided for installation of pollution control equipment.

(c)The WHO has supported a study to carry out the epidemiological investigation of morbidity due to air pollution which was carried out by the Vallabhbhai Patel Chest Institute, Delhi.

Disinvestment of Hindustan Insecticides Limited

*292. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to disinvest Hindustan Insecticides Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to take any steps to revive the company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise, in view of (a) above.

(c) Hindustan Insecticides Limited is not sick in terms of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provision) Act, 1985, hence it does not need to be revived. The Company is, however, being given budgetary support for various projects.